

## NEWS BRIEFS

### NAACP TO SEE OUSTED LOCAL LEADER IN COURT

The deposed head of the defunct Las Vegas chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People issued a press release on Tuesday stating that the branch "will finally have their (day) in court." Officers of the former branch were removed from office by decree of the NAACP's Board of Directors in April. In response, the former president of Branch 1111, Gene Collins, filed a lawsuit against the organization. A hearing in Clark County District Court was scheduled for this morning. Oddly, the release was issued under the NAACP logo, and lists Collins' advisor Chester Richardson and local attorney Matthew Callister as contact persons. The ousted officers want a restraining order that would effectively reinstate them, although Collins has since assumed state leadership of Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network. The suit also asks for restoration of the branch's charter, which was suspended. The action temporarily left Las Vegas without an NAACP chapter, however, an administrator from the national headquarters in Baltimore has been assigned to reorganize the chapter. Shortly after his removal for what the national body said was mismanagement of the branch and for violations of the NAACP constitution, Collins sued the civil rights organization in District Court. Listed as defendants were NAACP President and CEO Kweisi Mfume, National Board of Directors Chairman Julian Bond, Director of National Field Operations Nelson Rivers III and the NAACP's entire National Board of Directors.

### CBC HONORS CLINTON AT ITS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Former President William Jefferson Clinton will be honored this week at the Congressional Black Caucus' 2001 annual Legislative Conference Weekend, which celebrates 30 years of the CBC. Clinton, one of the most popular U.S. presidents in Black America, is among the awardees at the group's annual awards dinner this Saturday, said organizers. The theme for the conference, held in Washington, D.C., was "30 Years...Times Change, The Mission Does Not." Election reform and preserving historically Black colleges and universities were topics discussed during conference workshops.

### BLACKS FIGHT FOR MAYORAL POSTS IN MINNEAPOLIS, CINCINNATI

Two Blacks are among several African-Americans fighting to obtain or retain the mayor's job in their cities this Nov. 6. Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton, the city's first Black and first woman mayor, won second place in that city's Democratic primary, receiving 27 percent of the vote. "We are right where we need to be and we go forward," she reassured her supporters. R.T. Rybak, an Internet consultant, won with 34 percent of the vote. Meanwhile, Curtis Fuller, a former Cincinnati television news anchor, beat city Mayor Charlie Luken in its recent primary. Fuller, a former regional director of the National Association of Black Journalists, received 54 percent of the vote.

### U.S. CELEBRITIES: FIND PROMINENT HAITIAN JOURNALIST'S KILLER

A letter signed by Toni Morrison, Sydney Poitier, Spike Lee, Denzel Washington and many other American celebrities was presented to the Haitian Senate, asking the body to push authorities to find the killer of Jean Dominique, one of the country's well-known radio journalists. Killed in April of 2000, Dominique, 69, was a crusading reporter-commentator in a country where radio is the most powerful medium. Jonathan Demme, the Oscar-winning filmmaker and a friend of Dominique, began the letter campaign.

### JAMAICA'S ECONOMY SUFFERING FROM ATTACK ON UNITED STATES

Jamaica has taken strong economic blows from the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on U.S. soil. Edmund Bartlett, Jamaica Labor Party spokesman on tourism, has asked for an action plan to assist the national airline, Air Jamaica, and the tourism industry. Both have been hurt as a consequence of the suspension of U.S. air travel the week of the World Trade Center and Pentagon blasts. Bartlett said the local tourism industry had not been so badly damaged in the last 20 years. Meanwhile, exporters have lost perishable items that had been stranded in warehouses for more than a week.

# NYC immigrants feel attack's effects

NEW YORK (AP) — Layla El-Wafi decided to keep wearing the headscarf used by Muslim women despite the "dirty remarks and dirty looks" from strangers.

She also wears an American flag pin - partly to show solidarity, but partly as a defensive measure: In the new war on terrorism, this city of immigrants has become a place where some fear losing the very thing many came here for.

"I don't want to feel that I can't have the kind of freedom of expression we guarantee to everyone," said El-Wafi, whose family begged her to modify her appearance.

"I'm proud to be an American," she said. "I hate to feel that people are counting me as 'the other.'"

Across the country, reports of bias incidents against people who appear to be Middle Eastern have risen since the Sept. 11 terrorist

attacks, despite appeals for tolerance from President Bush and other top U.S. officials.

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has made similar pleas in New York, where as much as one-third of the population is foreign-born. Police reports of bias incidents since the attacks number in the dozens - from anti-Muslim graffiti to a baseball-bat assault on a turban-wearing Sikh.

The backlash is mild compared to two killings, in Texas and Arizona, that may have been motivated by anti-Arab sentiment. But Sikhs, Muslims, and other immigrants say they are greatly affected by increasing petty harassment in a city that prides itself on tolerance.

"My business is down 60 to 70 percent," said Izmar Yalai, who runs the Afghanistan Kebab House in Manhattan. "They stand outside and look. And then they just

walk away. I know they have anger and resentment. But we are as much American as any of them! We've been here 20 years. We are part of the American economy. We pay taxes and provide jobs."

For generations a gateway for immigrants to the United States, New York now has more than 110 ethnic groups. It is the nation's most populous city, with 8 million residents, and thrives on its image as a melting pot.

Amrik Singh Chawla, a financial consultant who is Sikh, was headed to the Trade Center to catch a train when he saw the second hijacked plane hit the building. Chawla ran for his life, dodging debris falling from the sky.

Amid the chaos, two men chased him, calling him a terrorist and demanding that he remove his turban. He got away, but said he has been harassed on other days as well. "You Muslim mosqui-

tos need to be killed and sent home," he recalled one man telling him.

Chawla, who was born in India but has lived here since, has decided to keep wearing his turban. To abandon his identity out of fear, he said, would be to capitulate to the terrorists and renounce the freedoms America stands for.

"When times are tough, you don't give up and run," he said.

Akbar Himanii, a Muslim from India and U.S. citizen who has been here for 20 years, owned a cafe in the Trade Center and feels fortunate that all his employees escaped unharmed. He also owns two eateries at the nearby South Street Seaport, and the sudden dearth of tourists has hit his business hard.

Himanii said he has been cursed at by strangers because of the way he looks. He asked his wife to wear jeans, not a (See Backlash, Page 8)

## Court: Schools can abandon busing

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — A federal appeals court ruled Friday that the Charlotte schools no longer practice intentional segregation and can scrap a 30-year-old, court-ordered busing plan.

The decision means the 105,000-student system in the city and surrounding Mecklenburg County no longer has to use race to determine a student's school assignment.

"This case is hopefully the final chapter in the saga of federal court control over the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools," said the decision by the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Va.

The district was ordered in 1971 to use busing to achieve racial equality, and since then has bused inner-city students to mostly white suburbs, and vice versa.

After the Charlotte schools were ordered to use busing, the same order was imposed on dozens of other school districts around the nation.

After meeting privately to review the court's 7-4 ruling, the school board said it would not appeal to the Supreme Court.

"By virtue of our vote, which was unanimous, we took action not to file an appeal," said school board chairman Arthur Griffin. "We want to move to the next stage."

Attorney James Ferguson, who represented black parents who wanted busing kept in place, said he needed more time to review the decision with his clients before deciding on an appeal.

He said he was encouraged that "four members of the court issued strong dissenting opinions." He also said he was surprised the school board, which had been allied with the black parents, reacted so quickly.

"I'm very surprised they made such a hasty decision," he said. "This is a complex decision and it just came down today. We won't reach

a hasty decision."

Unless the ruling is appealed, the desegregation plan will be abandoned at the start of the next school year.

"This (plan) started out as an important mechanism to provide quality education to students of all races," said attorney William Helfand, who represents a white parent whose lawsuit challenging his child's kindergarten assignment ultimately led to Friday's ruling. "It became dormant and a mechanism to

deny children these things.

"It denied African-American children good schools in their own neighborhoods and forced them to be bused across town. And it denied white children the opportunity to attend magnet schools because of their race."

In February, lawyers for black parents and the school board argued before the court that the desegregation order should remain in place.

"We still have disparities (See Busing, Page 18)

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